



State of Washington

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Mailing Address: 600 Capitol Way N - Olympia, Washington 98501-1091 - (360) 902-2200, TDD (360) 902-2207
Main Office location: Natural Resources Building - 1111 Washington Street SE - Olympia, WA

DETERMINATION OF NONSIGNIFICANCE (DNS)

Name of Proposal: OAK CREEK WILDLIFE AREA FOREST RESTORATION PROJECT

Description of Proposal:

The project's over-arching objective is to protect, and restore, riparian and forest habitat and provide for species diversity (2006 Oak Creek Wildlife Area Mgmt Plan and 2007, 2010 Updates) To meet this objective, the project is designed to move forest structure, composition, and wildlife habitat toward historic conditions (2008 WDFW Policy 5309, Managing Forests on WDFW Lands). This approach is expected to maintain ecological processes such as forest succession and disturbances (fire, insects, and diseases) within a more characteristic range. Site specific objectives and treatments were guided by The Tieton/Oak Creek Landscape Assessment and Treatment Prioritization (Churchill, unpublished report 2011) and The Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest Restoration Strategy (Okanogan-Wenatchee NF, 2010).

- The project will include commercial mechanical treatment on up to 758 acres and non commercial mechanical treatment on up to 1,200 acres.
- Prescribed fire treatments may be implemented on individual ownerships or as a 4,900 acre cross-boundary burn.
- Understory thinning using a variety of spacing prescriptions will be used to meet objectives, with a final tree density of 30-60 trees per acre.
- We will incorporate thermal cover and hiding patches for wildlife into prescriptions and create additional snags for cavity nesters.
- We will have no new roads following completion of the proposal, but some closed roads will be temporarily re-opened, and .6 miles of abandoned roads will have to be reconstructed.
- Plant native grasses on areas impacted by the project to stabilize soil and reduce weeds.

Proponent/Applicant:

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Oak Creek Wildlife Area
16601 US HWY 12
NACHES, WA 98937
Ross Huffman-Manager
509 653-2390

Location of Proposal: WDFW Oak Creek Wildlife Area, Yakima County; Sections 3, 5, 7, 11, 15 and 17, Township 14 North, Range 15 East WM

Lead Agency: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)

WDFW has determined that this proposal will likely not have a significant adverse impact on the environment. Therefore, state law¹ does not require an environmental impact statement (EIS). WDFW made this determination of nonsignificance (DNS) after we reviewed the environmental checklist and other information on file with us.

We issued this DNS according to state rules.² We will **not act on this proposal for 14 days** from the date we issued the DNS. Agencies, affected tribes, and members of the public are invited to comment on this proposal or DNS. We must receive your comments within 14 days of the date of this letter. This means we must receive your comments by **March 26, 2012**

Method of Comment:

The following procedures shall govern the method to comment on agency SEPA proposals. Comments received through these procedures are part of the official SEPA record for this proposal.

You can submit your comments any one of the following ways:

- Email to SEPAdesk2@dfw.wa.gov
- Online at the WDFW SEPA website comment link at: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/licensing/sepa/>
- Fax to (360) 902-2946;
- Mail to the address below.

Responsible Official: Bob Zeigler

Position/Title: SEPA/NEPA Coordinator, WDFW Regulatory Services Section

Address: 600 Capitol Way North, Olympia, WA 98501-1091

After the comment period closes, applicants may view the updated status of this proposal on the WDFW SEPA website: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/licensing/sepa/> Once the status is posted as final, applicants and permittees may take action on the proposal. When a proposal is modified or withdrawn, notice will be given in accordance with state law.¹

If you have questions about this DNS or the details of the proposal, contact Bob Zeigler at the address, e-mail, or fax number above; you can also call him at (360) 902-2578.

DATE OF ISSUE: March 9, 2012

SIGNATURE:



Footnotes

1. RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c)
2. WAC 197-11-340(2).

SEPA Log Number: 12 -018. dns